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CHURCH UNION

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NEWS AND VIEWS

NOVEMBER 1957

'Relations between Anglican and Other Churches'

CHURCH UNION

NEWS AND VIEWS

(New Series)

Vol. 2 }

Organ of the Negotiating Committee for Church Union in
North India and Pakistan

{ No. 4

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Church Union

News and Views

(New Series)

1947—1957

AT the time that the last issue of Church Union News and Views was coming from the press, both India and Pakistan were looking back to the events which took place ten years ago, the achievement of free nationhood within the Commonwealth. The events of August 1947 were the culmination of a long process which some would trace back a hundred years to 1857, even though nobody in that year could have foreseen the course of history which led to the India or the Pakistan of the mid-twentieth century.

In the same way, the Inauguration of Union, when God brings it about in North-India and Pakistan, will be the culmination of a process with a long and varied history. It will not be possible at that time for us to trace in retrospect each step of the journey which will have brought us to the verge of the Promised Land, from the early days of pioneer missionary work in North India.

Our fellow-Christians in South India have behind them a longer history of Christian witness than we have here in the north, and it is in the fitness of things that in the year in which we have reached the stage of publishing the Plan of Church Union in what is intended to be its final form, they should already be looking back with gratitude on the

way in which God has led the Church of South India during the first ten years of its history. We are privileged to be able to share in their rejoicings in this number, since we are permitted to print below the sermon which was preached at Bangalore by the first Moderator of the C. S. I. on September 27th, the 10th anniversary of the Inauguration of the Church of South India.

Among the lessons which we are called to learn through the experience of our fellow-Christians in the south is the great evangelical truth that 'the way to life is through death', —that as individual denominations we must be prepared to surrender our identity; that glory should be rendered, not to Baptist convictions, to Anglican traditions or to the Presbyterian ethos, but to God alone. If some among us feel, as our predecessors in South India felt, that, so far as we are concerned, the negotiations might as well be brought to an end, that we are being asked to give up more than we are willing to concede for the sake of unity, let us again take courage as we are reminded of God's charge to Joshua. We have not yet been granted the privilege of crossing the Jordan into the Promised Land, and long after we have reached that initial goal we shall be hearing that further word addressed to Joshua: "There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed."

Translations of The Plan of Union

The Urdu and Hindi translations of the Third Edition of the Plan of Church Union have now been published, and further particulars are given on the back cover of this issue.

The Marathi and Gujarati translations are in process of preparation but have not yet been published. The Bengali translation is undergoing further revision, and it is hoped that it will soon appear.

Entering the Promised Land

Joshua 1 : 9

(A Sermon preached by the Rt. Rev. A. M. Hollis on September 27th, 1957).

THE years of wandering in the wilderness are ended. The people of God are about to enter into the Promised Land. This is God's charge to their leader and to them. 'Be strong and of a good courage... For the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.' Ten years ago we in South India stood as it were on the border of the Promised Land of our unity. On September 27th, in St. George's Cathedral, Madras, the Church of South India was inaugurated. There had been twenty-seven years of official negotiations, and many more of less formal discussion. Again and again it had seemed that the difficulties in the way of that organic union which the negotiating Churches sought were too great to be overcome. Those who took part have told us how, more than once, the delegates felt convinced that they could do no more than decide to bring the negotiations to an end. And, time after time, something happened. What they could only describe as the Holy Spirit of God took charge of them. They were brought to realize that the end which they were seeking was according to God's will and that, where we seek God's will, there can be no obstacles which God cannot overcome, if we will trust and obey Him. To treat God's purposes as impracticable or impossible is, in effect, to deny God.

They learnt that God is with His servants whithersoever they go. And they learnt that He calls His people to move, not to sit still. I can remember how, again and again, people would talk of what we commemorate to-day as the Consummation of Union, and how again and again it was insisted that 'this was the wrong word. September 27th, 1947 was the Inauguration of the Church of South India. Then we entered into our Promised Land, but we had no more ended our struggles than Joshua and the children of Israel had ended their struggles when they crossed Jordan. Our life in the wider unity began that day ten years ago. True, the long period of negotiations was finished, just as for the Israelites the wilderness journeyings were at

an end. But life was in a real sense just beginning, that new life which is promised to individuals and to institutions when, and only when, they are prepared to die. (John 12 : 24).

For this is only a beginning. As we are reminded in our C. S. I. Constitution : 'The Church of South India acknowledges that, in every effort to bring together divided members of Christ's Body into one organization, the final aim must be the union in the Universal Church of all who acknowledge the name of Christ.' Even in South India there is much to do before such a union of all Christians has come about. But that is still not the end. The Church does not exist for itself. It is the instrument through which God makes known His love for the whole world. That text in John 17 which has played so great a part in the whole union movement reminds us of this : 'that they may all be one...that the world may believe that thou didst send me.' We came together in the belief that 'there will be greater peace, closer fellowship and fuller life within the Church, and also renewed eagerness and power for the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ.' (Constitution II. 2).

Those who pioneered the way for us over those twenty-seven long years were again and again driven back to rely on God alone. So must we be. God makes to us the same promise that He made to Joshua : 'I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.' But we can fail God. The theme of the next Synod is to be a serious attempt to find out how far we have been able to fulfil those hopes with which we came together ten years ago. Have we in fact found greater peace, closer fellowship and fuller life? Is there renewed eagerness and power for the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ? This is not the time to attempt anything like a complete answer to those questions, nor have I the information needed. Yet I would provisionally answer both Yes and No.

Yes, so far as those in responsible positions are concerned. The leaders of the Church of

South India have been set free into a unity and understanding, a sense of the power and effectiveness of God, a realization of adventure, which is beyond anything that we dared to hope for when we were still separated in our different denominations. We have been able to produce forms of worship, Communion, Baptism, Confirmation, Covenant Service and new Forms for the Ordination of Deacons and Presbyters and for the Consecration of Bishops, which are outstandingly better than anything which existed before our union. This is not just our personal and perhaps prejudiced opinion. It is the considered judgment of the experts of many different denominational traditions in different parts of the world. Our theological understanding within C. S. I., so far as the responsible representatives of the Church are concerned, is most striking. One so much takes it for granted in our daily life that it is only when one meets with representatives of some other Church that one realizes that our agreement is closer, within ten years, than is theirs one with another in what has been one Church for centuries. It is in fact far easier to discover what C. S. I. believes than it is to discover what the Church of England believes. We did not agree ten years ago. We have been led into understanding through our life in unity. I have time only for one more example, the growth of work among women, both through the Women's Fellowship and in the Women's Order. In great measure that is a new thing, a creative act of God that has come in and through our unity. There has been great advance during these ten years, much ground for thanksgiving.

Yet that is not the whole truth. We ask again: Is there greater peace, closer fellowship and fuller life within the Church, and also renewed eagerness and power for the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ? We have also to answer No. There are too many congregations, too many individual members, where there has been no growth in understanding and no increase in evangelistic zeal. They look inward and backward, not outward and forward. It is the criticism of many visitors to the Church of South India that, over large areas of the Church, there seems to be no desire to enter into the new riches which are available through our unity. One can go to many congregations and find them determinedly refusing to use any of the new and much better forms of worship, and

doggedly clinging to what they had before 1947. There are still too many whose standard of reference, in practice and in doctrine, is not that Church of South India to which they now belong, but their old allegiance. They judge things by what is, or was, Anglican or Methodist, Presbyterian or Congregationalist. They still seem to look on union as meaning that one day everyone will come to agree exactly with them and to worship as they like to do. They manifest to an extreme degree that dislike of serious thought and unwillingness for any change which, we need always to remember, was one of the main causes that led the ancient people of God to crucify their Messiah. As they accused Stephen: 'We have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place and shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us.' (Acts 6: 14).

One example of this. In the basis of Union, accepted by the authoritative bodies of all the uniting Churches, it is said that after the inauguration of Union, in Christ's spirit of love, all the ministers of the uniting Churches will be accepted as 'equally, without distinction or difference, ministers of the united Church.' The ministry is unified. In spite of this, and in spite of the example given by all the bishops, both those who were Anglican bishops before 1947 and those consecrated at or after the inauguration of union, many congregations and many individuals are still not ready to accept the ministrations of those ministers ordained within a different tradition. True, they have the right to do this if it is a matter of conscientious conviction. There is no desire within C. S. I. to force people to act against their consciences. But it is fair to ask them to examine themselves, to see whether they have in fact ever seriously thought about what they are doing. It may be that there is nothing there but a blind objection to change. That is not the way to glorify God and to show our gratitude for the new riches which He has given us.

For our standards can never be the teaching or practice of those Churches to which we belonged before union. We have found it true that the way to life is through death. It was when the three separate denominations in South India were ready to die, to lose their separate identity, that God was able to work this miracle. That same truth, a truth taught by our Lord both in words and in act, is true for the Churches outside India. There is no

final future for the Church of England, or the Methodist Church or any other denomination, except to be ready to die. That is God's law of life: 'except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it remaineth alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit.' And it is true, as we have recognized, for C. S. I.

Here we come to the amazing challenge of Philippians 2. See what the Apostle is asking of his converts: vv. 1-4. That is not written to a small holy few, but to the whole Church in that place. Our natural reaction is to dismiss it as impracticable, the kind of thing we are used to in church, but cannot be expected to take seriously. Paul does take it seriously. He means it to be true. He is convinced that it can be true. If not, then the whole Christian profession is nonsense. For his grounds of confidence are just that

this has actually happened in Jesus. Here is the new creation. It is possible because here it is actual. We are in Christ Jesus, not just in moments of special illumination or spiritual exaltation but always. There is to be no moment of the life of the Christian which is not a life in Christ Jesus. The ground of our unity is not in any effort or determination of our own but in God Himself. That takes us back again to the great prayer of John 17. We are to be and can be one because God is one. Our unity is the work of that God who is one. The aim and effect of that unity is that the world may believe in the truth that the Father has sent the Son, that the world may be saved. Let us remind ourselves of this. Let us thank God for this. Let us offer ourselves again to God that we may become the more perfect instruments of His saving love.

The Believer and the Church

REV. W. G. WICKRAMASINGHE

THE chief inspiration for negotiations on Church Union is undoubtedly the Biblical doctrine of the nature and mission of the Church. During the last decade the doctrine of the Church has rightly come to the forefront, and there is increasingly a consensus of opinion in the different branches of the Universal Church regarding the sacred vocation of the Church. The New Testament maintains unequivocally that the Church is God's creation consequent on revelation of the redemptive purpose in Jesus Christ. God, who focussed Himself in human form to speak personally to men in the only kind of language they understand, has graciously called into being the Church, which is to-day the embodiment of the truth that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. The Church therefore is God's second great gift to the world.

In the Fourth Gospel our Lord promised His disciples that His presence with them would be made manifest in a more realistic and dynamic manner after His death. The presence of the Living Christ is enshrined in the fellowship of men and women drawn together by the common experience of God's

redeeming love, and witnessing to a quality of life which transforms personality. Charged with power that does not belong to this world, and entrusted with a heavenly mission, the Church has continued to be the essential medium of God's operation in the world. The New Testament Scriptures therefore unfold to the world this new phenomenon called the Church, and the history of Christianity is a story of the Church at work in the world,—rather, the Church striving to be the Church, true to her mission and faithful to her Lord and Master.

A closer study of the New Testament Church as it began to expand its frontiers reaching out to the countries of the Mediterranean world, and the exposition of the apostles that in the Church the mystery of God is being unfolded before their eyes further enlightens our understanding of the meaning of the Church. It was a unique fellowship drawing together the Jew and the Gentile and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that was mightily at work. The Church therefore in the experience of the first Christians was a miracle of God's grace.

The Constitution and Structure of the Church—Membership, its Privileges and Responsibilities

There was a striking dividing line between the Church and the world. The Church was in the world, to serve the world, and yet it was drawn out of the world. Those who were called believers, that is, those who by accepting Christ as the promised Messiah experienced a revolutionary change mentally and spiritually, found themselves incorporated in the new divine society. A person like St. Paul, who loved much because he knew in his own heart that he was a great sinner, felt this sacred calling too good to be true, and he could only confess that he had no claims for membership in the Church, but that he owed it to the grace and love of God. Apart from His wondrous grace he could see no justification for being numbered with the saints. The believers, then, were those who made a conscious, deliberate choice, who when they understood the Incarnation, the Death and the Resurrection of Jesus as God's personal word of salvation and hope made the right response—'My Lord and my God'. They were those who opened wide their hearts and minds to God and knew the thrill and the wondrous joy of being caught up with something divine. In the Church as unfolded in the book of Acts we come across a group of people to whom the spiritual realm was as real as the physical world, and who lived by a power which belonged to that realm. Their vision of the things of the spirit interpreted the meaning and purpose of human existence. They began to see life against the background of eternity. Even as time and eternity met in the incarnation of our Lord, so in the Church there is a new demonstration of ordinary men and women living in close touch with the other world—that is, in the presence of the living God. These men and women who made up the visible Church were described as believers, for that was the significant criterion which decided whether a person was a Christian or not, whether he was in the Church or not.

The many images of the Church which are intended to bring out the different features of its nature have been subjected to very close study. The Church as the Body of Christ illustrates the intimate union of the believer with his Lord and with other Christians, the mystical union of the individual believer with Christ and the corporate union of

the fellowship with its Lord. St. Paul rises to the heights of Christian experience when he speaks of his intimate union with his Lord—'I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me'. The doctrine of 'in Christ' as expounded in Ephesians is one of the great treasures of the Church. While the Church and the means of entry into it are entirely due to God's initiative, the Church in the experience of the believer is a reciprocal relationship. God so respects human personality that it is contrary to His nature to force man into situations or undertakings which God has ordained for man's sublime good. Man's personal response is a significant and necessary feature of his membership in the Church. God speaks and man responds, and the Church continues to be the place where God's voice is clearly heard. This is the secret of the vitality of the Church, for it lives by the power of this experience of God in its midst. Jesus, endowed while on earth with all divine authority, called for faith on the part of man for the effectual working of His purpose. The evangelist Mark records the importance of this truth when he refers to one incident where Jesus could do no mighty work because of the people's unbelief.

The Church in the World—The Witness of Christian Living

The Church, the community of the New Covenant, began to demonstrate to the world a new quality of living and a new basis for human relationships. Under the inspiration of the new found love, all social distinctions were cast aside, and revolutionary social change began to take place. In their attitude to other people the considerations of rich or poor, educated or uneducated, Jew or Gentile, slave or free, became secondary. The only thing that mattered was whether a person was a believer. In the first flush of their enthusiasm, the first Christians tried to give up claims to private property and wealth, and adopted a policy of living by sharing—a brother in Christ had a just claim on the sympathy, love and support of all the brethren. Here was something totally new, something very appealing, and something creative of the kind of ideal society men and women were secretly yearning for (Acts 2: 44-47). Secondly, it was the responsibility of the believers to conduct themselves in all thing in a manner worthy of the Gospel.

The ethical injunctions of the apostles are vivid and clear (e.g., Col. 3: 1; Rom. 6; 12: 1, 2). They were required to bring Christian insight and values to bear upon their social and political obligations. In face of the temptation to compromise with the lower standards of morality characteristic of many of the Gentile cities, the voice of the apostle is clear and distinct—'Be ye separate'. In the face of suspicion, hatred and persecution by heathen rulers the Christians were required to be law-abiding citizens giving no occasion to be branded as lawless men. (Compare the teaching of I Peter). The Christians were to be on earth as local representatives of God, a colony of heaven. Their life was one of joyous freedom to be realized in glad and full surrender of oneself to Christ. The bondservant of Christ alone knows the meaning of true freedom, to which the Church invites all men. The Church, then, is the divine pattern given to the world as the first-fruits of the finished work of Christ. It is the signal witness to the truth that a true brotherhood amongst men is possible only in the acceptance of God the Father as revealed in His Son Jesus Christ. The Church is an end in itself and a means to an end. It is the New Creation, the New Israel, which is the most conclusive evidence that the Risen Christ is at work in the world to-day reaching out to all nations with the offer of His sovereign love.

Baptists and the New Testament

Baptists who are negotiating for Church Union both in India and in Ceylon have been very jealous for their stand with regard to the nature of the relationship between the Christian and the Church. The distinctive Baptist insights and values are not all concentrated in their mode of Baptism. The Baptist doctrine of Baptism, however, and the practice of Believers Baptism conserve the essential truth as outlined in the preceding paragraphs. Discipleship is a responsible and costly undertaking, and Jesus warned those who would be His followers to count the cost. Jesus called 'Follow Me'. Peter, James, John and countless men and women ever since have heard the call and followed Him. The decision to follow was their response to Jesus, for which they were responsible. This is the parable or the illustration of what has happened ever since, and what should happen if Christianity is to be

meaningful. While God's omnipotence cannot be limited or curbed by the willingness or unwillingness of sinful mortals, God who limited Himself in the Incarnations does not overpower man with His saving grace. The Baptist position is that God's great gifts must be intelligently and thankfully received by men. It is only those who see with eyes of faith the wonder of God in Jesus, the majesty of His love and the tenderness of His concern for the fallen race that can enter into the blessing of the children of God.

The Church as understood in this light can never be an organization of people who have a common religion, but must shine before the world as God's New Creation where the continuity of the work of Christ is focussed. In the schemes for Church Union, the Baptists are able to continue in the discussions because they are satisfied that these essential Baptist distinctives are preserved. In these schemes, those baptized in infancy or dedicated according to Baptist rites are brought within the care, concern and instruction of the Church. Baptism in infancy or dedication does not by itself entitle a person to fully responsible membership of the Church. The baptized in infancy, it is hoped, will grow up in the knowledge and fear of the Lord, and after due instruction, make profession of the faith at a service of Confirmation. It is at this stage that a person is admitted into the fellowship of the Church as a communicant member. The Church in its communicant membership will therefore be a Fellowship of Believers who will play a responsible part in every department of Church life. In so far as no violence is done to the essential nature of the Church as a community of the New Covenant, the fundamental Baptist position is preserved. Further, as already stated, the Baptist form of Believer's Baptism which enshrines this truth and demonstrates it so vividly will continue to be practised in the United Church, and those who are stranger to this doctrine and practice will see the meaningfulness of this symbolic act which proclaims the Gospel most powerfully.

The essential New Testament teaching regarding the structure of the Church, its membership, and the relation of the individual to the Church could rightly be the basis of foundation of this grand superstructure which we hope and pray will rise before the world to the greater glory of His Name and the more effective ministry of the Church. The

does not mean that Baptists have no other difficulties about the schemes of union that are before them, but I believe that the measure of agreement so far reached on vital issues affecting the central core of the faith inspires us to wait patiently and humbly upon God for His continual guidance. It is the

Lord's will that the unity of the Church be expressed and demonstrated to the world in our time and generation. Obedience is our response to His will. In these negotiations for Union, God's Spirit is at work teaching His people to carry out this ministry of obedience.

A Catholic Basis for Union

(A critique of Church Union Reflecting the Thinking of the Disciples of Christ)

REV. L. FRANKLIN WHITE

THE powerful and important demand for church union, of which the Plan of Church Union in North India and Pakistan is but one facet, is a notable characteristic of most of Protestantism today, just as the demand for liberty was characteristic of Luther's Europe four hundred years ago.

From the time of the inception of what is called "The Modern Ecumenical Movement" the Disciples of Christ have had more than a casual interest in this *newer reformation*. Yet none assume that the rather belated participation of the Disciples of Christ as a negotiating body in the North India and Pakistan Plan is indicative of a belated interest in union movements.

The largest of the present-day union movements in America is the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States. In its initial formation in 1908 and its subsequent history and work a number of leaders from the Disciples of Christ have played a prominent part; one, in fact, actually suggested the name that since has been so acceptable to all because of its *catholic* or *universal* nature; while another has served as its resident. Disciples of Christ also have been a part of the World Council of Churches since its formation, and have been active in many other co-operative and union movements in various parts of the world, notably in the Philippines and Japan where they have become a part of the organic unions there. No communion, in fact, has been more active in all the co-operative enterprises of the churches in recent years or more sympathetic with the ecumenical trend toward thinking less of the churches and more of the Church.

The Disciples of Christ were born with an ecumenical mind, and at their best they were matured with an ecumenical passion. The Disciples of Christ (always called locally either "Christian Church" or "Church of Christ," and generally called collectively by the plural of either of these names, with no absolute uniformity asked or demanded) have a present-day total membership of about two million, and they came into being as a fellowship, communion or brotherhood 150 years ago through the gradual converging of separate streams—some in America and some in England—of thought that had at its core the earnest desire to consummate a union of God's people on the basis of what is truly catholic or universal.

Although some among them—and Disciples of Christ in India have had their share—have not always lived out the implications of that which created the fellowship and was meant to create a *uniting church*, which would ever on the basis of catholicity draw together the sectarian elements of a weak and divided Body of Christ, the Disciples of Christ at their best by consensus of opinion and sound Christian judgment have always protested against a divided Christendom and urged an organic union of Christ's followers.

While the Disciples of Christ have themselves not been entirely free from divisive tendencies promoted by Pharisaical individuals or groups who would seek to bind the minds of people into the strait jacket of a new *orthodoxy*, whether of doctrine or organization or method, they as a whole have sought to maintain a distinctive catholic position, message and fellowship. Their

keynote as a people with a congregational polity is *corporate loyalty* and not legalized discipline. Some few extremists among them have sought to promote a stereotyped, legalistic narrowness of doctrine and method as a basis of union, while other extremists have advocated a union merely on the basis of a good-natured tolerance of each other's peculiarities.

The Basis of Christian Unity.

Disciples of Christ as a whole, however, seek to stand for ecumenicity on the basis of "unity of diversity", preferring to rest their whole case for unity on the Pauline basis of *liberty and corporate loyalty*. They have never felt that loyalty is best preserved in the church by legalized methods of setting up infallible standards in creedalized or restrictive forms that are principally in the hands of the clergy. For this reason, they by their very nature have never adopted any official doctrines which can be regarded as final and a voted standard of orthodoxy. They have, however, generally recognized and proclaimed certain doctrinal emphases, preferring to arrive unofficially at certain conclusions by the method of *consensus fidelium*. They know well the havoc wrought in the churches both by *private* interpretation working alone, in the one extreme, and by *rigid official* creedal exactness, in the other extreme. They have, therefore, consistently claimed that in all matters which have to do with the division between churches an appeal must be made to the competent, qualified, spiritual and *unofficial* scholarship of the Church in all ages and in all its scattered communions, finding there the consensus of Christian thought on the subject at hand. They have never been afraid to submit any matter of controversy to the judgment of the sanctified scholarship of the Church universal in its entirety—not just to the opinions of a few negotiating at any given time. Such a judgment then becomes the *catholic* possession of all and the *exclusive* possession of none.

The classic phrase of Rupertus Meldenius, coined in Germany many generations ago at a time of violent conflict among intolerant parties in the churches, has become a watchword with the Disciples of Christ from the beginning of their movement (making it about as official as their congregational nature and polity of freedom will allow them to

make it!). That phrase, "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, love," contains the basis of the plan of unity promoted by the Disciples of Christ throughout their history.

The first part of that phrase actually contains the secret or uniqueness of the plea. While making no claim of a monopoly use of this terse phrase, the Disciples of Christ have insisted that by *essential* is meant those basic things of the Christian faith that are *catholic* or universal, i. e. *only those things which are accepted by all Christians as valid 'legal tender'*, whether or not other 'tender' coined provincially. In all other matters there should be liberty of opinion.

A careful study of the New Testament church reveals that there was neither a dead level of uniformity in all matters, nor was there division over differences. The church in New Testament times was united in those things *catholic*, but it also had a diversity almost as great as is evident among the various churches of the present day. The things that united were those basic and *catholic* elements that gave preeminence to Christ.

The Four Points of Catholicity

The Disciples of Christ have, in general, therefore, stood for four points of catholicity as being a simple and sound basis for church union. And yet, strangely enough, it has been exactly at these points where they have been most misunderstood and criticized in the past. These points are in no sense the *exclusive* and *peculiar* possession of the Disciples of Christ alone, but are truly points of catholicity universally accepted by all. And these very points have in the present day conditioned much of ecumenical thinking made evident. It is only on these *catholic* points that they rest their case and plea for unity and organic union; in all other points beyond these let there be liberty!

These points of catholicity are (1) the *catholic* or universal book; the New Testament; (2) the *catholic* or universal creed or confession of faith; the acceptance of the Lordship and Saviourhood of Jesus Christ; (3) the *catholic* or universal name, for the individual and the church; and (4) the *catholic* or universal ceremonies or ordinances: baptism and the communion, without insisting on any single creedalistic interpretation of the exact content or meaning of either.

The Catholic Book

It is no accident that the Disciples of Christ put the New Testament first, for this is a *catholic* or universal criterion by which the truly universal in other matters can be discovered. All Christians accept the authority of the New Testament, for none would deny its place in the Christian faith; therefore, it is *catholic* to all, even though some would add some *peculiar* acceptance of the Old Testament as also binding upon the Christian. Disciples of Christ, in general, while agreeing as to the divine inspiration of both the Old and New Testaments and to their being a faithful record of God's redemptive action in human life, would not accept them as being *equally binding* in authority on Christians. While accepting the Old Testament as true and as having been of authority for Jews, they hold the *catholic authority* of the New Testament *alone* as embodying the teaching of Christ and His apostles and providing a sufficient rule of faith and practice and authority to teach us what we are to do to become and remain Christians, resting their case for unity mainly on express words of scripture according to scholarly translations rather than on speculative interpretations. The Disciples of Christ have consistently felt that any attempt to settle matters relating to Christian faith and order by appealing to the *non-catholic* authority of the Old Testament or church traditions, however much internal value they may have, proves divisive rather than unifying.

The Catholic Creed

From this *catholic* book one learns of the *catholic* creed, which is the *sine qua non* of the Christian faith and Church. This creed is simply the affirmation revealed in the New Testament that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God," and this faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord is held in *personal* rather than *creedal* terms. A familiar phrase used by Disciples of Christ is "No Creed but Christ". While recognizing the practical usefulness of systematic statements of beliefs insofar as they are merely the best expression at the time of the summarized interpretation by consensus of opinion, they have held that circumscribed creeds, since they rest even at their best upon inferences from the Scriptures and are phrased in terms of philosophical speculation, must always be considered

matters of opinion and not binding, therefore, upon the conscience of all. Furthermore, Disciples of Christ would hold that any formulated creedal statement set in theological or abstract terms can easily be misinterpreted into divisive shibboleths, thus giving rise to the danger of fresh divisions rather than further union.

The Catholic Name

The *catholic* name also discovered by referring to the New Testament and the consensus of opinion within the whole of Christendom. While it is readily admitted that several terms are used in the New Testament for the Church and all would thus be *scriptural*, the universally-accepted scriptural name is "Churches of Christ" or the etymological equivalent "Christian Churches," which term in its very formation gives preeminence to Christ. While there are rich values in names adopted by various groups, such names in themselves give preeminence to a practice, a method or a *peculiar* emphasis, rather than to Christ Himself.

While referring to themselves as individuals in the collective sense by the use of the term "Disciples of Christ," they as a people have consistently refused to call the church itself anything but "Christian Churches" or "Churches of Christ." This insistence has in no way been due to any *peculiar* exclusiveness or "holier-than-thou attitude; it is simply a sincere attempt to use a name that is *catholic* or universal, thus providing a readily-acceptable *catholic* basis for a name in union.

The Catholic Ordinances

Having taken the *catholic* book as authoritative, having confessed the simple *catholic* creed, and having taken the *catholic* name, one then comes to the *catholic* or universal ceremonies; baptism and the communion. And here, perhaps, the Disciples of Christ in their plea have been more readily misunderstood than at any other point. Baptism in its *catholic* meaning—not in any *peculiar* or *non-catholic* meaning—is the immersion in water of a believer. Baptism by immersion is accepted universally in Christendom as *legal tender*; whether or not something else is promoted by a particular group within its own fellowship. Disciples of Christ, therefore, have always stood for baptism by immersion only, because it is the only mode declared by

all to be *catholic*. In no way have they done this to be difficult, intransigent or exclusive, but simply to witness to a workable basis of unity by recognizing the only catholic or universal mode of baptism. Furthermore, Disciples of Christ, while holding to the catholicity of the act of immersion, have never insisted that any *single* interpretation of the meaning or theological content of the act is *catholic*. They simply let its meaning be as rich and *varied* as is evident in the New Testament descriptions of the act.

The communion or Lord's Supper—the latter a term preferred among Disciples of Christ—finds its catholicity in the universal recognition of the *practice* that offers both bread and wine to each participant. The Disciples of Christ, however, have never insisted on any *single* theological interpretation of the ordinance, for a careful study of the New Testament reveals the fact that not all Christians of that day understood alike the exact meaning of the ceremony even while being universally observed. Therefore, the Disciples of Christ would promote unity by stressing merely the catholic observance of the ceremony, rather than attempting to creedalize in a given statement the meaning and content. Furthermore, they seek to recognize and emulate the *catholic* acceptance by responsible scholarship of the fact that in the New Testament the ordinances belonged to the Church—not just to the *clergy*—and were made the very centre of their worship and fellowship in a dramatic testimony to the continuing presence of Christ in their midst, the ceremonies even in the advanced days of expansion being observed *at least as often* as they met together on “the first day of the week” in corporate worship to give preeminence to Christ in all things.

Catholicity or Uniformity?

Disciples of Christ approach the subject of unity and organic union, therefore, by seeking to be distinctive *only* in the fact of their holding the catholic or universal elements as their *practice*, leaving interpretations of actual content to the realm of “liberty in opinions.” They strongly feel that only therein is there any simple, workable and acceptable basis of organic union that will form a *uniting church*, rather than a *united church* of less than universal character.

Lasting and enlarging church union will

never be achieved on the basis of exact uniformity in all matters, but the Disciples of Christ stoutly and devoutly believe that it can be achieved on the basis of a few *catholic* points forming the norm or unity-basis for the union. They would then leave the other matters to the realm of liberty as Christians in love and tolerance grow together in Christ and His Church. Any attempt to *standardize* in a static constitution—whether static in diversity or uniformity—all doctrinal and organizational matters will freeze the very springs of such a union's nobility of purpose and vitality of aspirations, thus inhibiting the free flow of profounder meanings into the minds and hearts of Christians both within its own newly-circumscribed fellowship and within other groups yet to come within the orbit of organic fellowship. It is very disturbing to the present writer that often in union schemes more rigidity of practice and more uniformity of theological interpretation is demanded of uniting groups than has been evident in the separate bodies themselves before union. This fact leads one to observe that often the real factor in division or union is not so much theological issues, but a cultural ethos of socio-economic drives, historical traditions and aesthetic tastes. These factors, therefore, tend to inhibit people from accepting as a basis for abiding union those very fundamental elements that already are acknowledged within the various groups as being *catholic* and truly *ecumenical*.

As Disciples of Christ view the Plan of Church Union in North India and Pakistan, they can rejoice in the earnest desire and effort on the part of the negotiating churches to consummate a real organic union. One main regret, however, is that they were not present earlier as a negotiating body, both for the sake of understanding and being understood. For the progress made and the dreams dreamed, however, they give thanks to God, and they can only pray that Christ will truly lead His divided people into an ever-widening and ever-uniting union.

Some Misgivings

In the light of the afore-stated principles of approach to union as presented in the *catholic* points, the Disciples of Christ are compelled, however, to view the Plan with many misgivings. For one thing, the plan, especially at the outset of the union, seeks in

a formalized way to solve too much, the result of which is sometimes not solution, but complexity and even contradiction (if logic is logic). The Plan also seems to *officialize* too many differences. The Plan appears to promote a *rigidity of diversity*, particularly on points dealing with the sacraments and church membership, that hinders or prevents the free working of the Holy Spirit through a *consensus fidelium* yet to be worked out among the believers themselves. Diversity of opinion there will be—and richer the Church will be for it!—but why should any Plan or Scheme seek to give official permanency to that diversity, without witness to new insights of truth unless *episcopally* sanctioned to do so? The Plan on some points seems to promote a perpetuation of differences, rather than seeking a way to resolve such differences.

When there are differences of opinion in thought and practice in *non-catholic* matters, why cannot these be tolerated within the Christian fellowship without requiring for such differences formal and official sanction by every one? Someone has aptly said that the surest way to sterilize a Christian truth or a biblical interpretation is to build a sectarian wall around it. Surely such a statement would apply to *immunization from without and sterilization from within*, both of which should be avoided at all costs in any union scheme.

After careful scrutiny, the Plan would appear to the Disciples of Christ as widening the gulf between so-called *non-episcopal* churches outside the present Scheme and the churches in the Plan accepting the *episcopal* basis, thus making the consummated union merely a United Church of larger, circumscribed *denominational* status, rather than a *uniting church* that would make it easier for more and more groups to come within its fellowship.

The Disciples of Christ, born with an ecumenical mind and matured with an ecumenical passion, stand ready to join in any union movement led by the Spirit of God that professes and practices "unity in things *catholic*," "liberty in things *non-catholic*," and "love in all things." Wherein the Plan of Church Union in North India and Pakistan promotes these principles, the Disciples of Christ stand ready to share in that scheme, but wherein that Plan cuts categorically across these principles they will find great difficulty, to say the least, in becoming a part of it. The earnest prayer and hope of the Disciples of Christ is that the union desired will be *uniting* in the future as well as *united* now, thus giving Christ "preeminence in all things," as He would draw all His scattered flock together.

Relation Between the Anglican and Mar Thoma Churches

RT. REV. W. Q. LASH

TWENTY years ago, on April the 4th 1937 to be precise, there was a solemn promulgation in St. Paul's Cathedral, Calcutta. This was the climax of conversations which had been going on in Travancore and in the authoritative councils of the Anglican and Mar Thoma Churches for several years previously. From the Anglican side it marked the occasion of the first authorised occasional inter-communion between an Anglican and Eastern Church.

The Rules of Comity which were drawn up in preparation for this action took into account the situation at that time. It was a situation in which there had been not yet a wide dispersion of the members of the Mar

Thoma Church, and it pictured a relationship between the two Churches being almost wholly in Travancore itself, where Anglican and Mar Thoma Congregations were in close proximity to each other, and there were close social relations owing to frequent inter-marriages. The rules are therefore rather precise and limited to a circumscribed set of conditions.

Circumstances Calling for a Fresh Approach

Already there were some missions of the Mar Thoma Church outside Travancore, and during the War years, there was a beginning of wide dispersion of members of the Church through India and after the War beyond

India to neighbouring countries. This led to congregations of Christians from Kerala being formed in a number of cities. At first some of these were of members of different Churches in Kerala coming together so that they could worship in their own language. In course of time, separate congregations were formed and a number of Ashrams and Missions of the Mar Thoma Church were established. This led to relationships between the two Churches in a far wider context than had been previously pictured in the conversations held between the Churches, and in point of fact the relations between them have gone beyond the limited provisions of the original rules of comity.

The inauguration of Church Union in South India in September 1947, brought another factor into the situation. The former Anglicans of the Central Travancore Diocese were no longer Anglicans, and the relations between the Mar Thoma and Anglican Churches were therefore to be considered as being outside Travancore instead of inside. Naturally enough also in the Mar Thoma Church there has been close consideration with regard to relations between members of that Church and members of the Church of South India.

All these factors have led the two Churches to feel that the time has come for a fresh approach to each other so that their relations may be clarified in a manner more suited to the actual circumstances which have arisen. With this end in view the Episcopal Synod of the C. I. P. B. C. in 1955 endorsed a suggestion that further conversations should be held. Preliminary conversations were therefore held in Trivandrum this year and the results of these conversations were considered by the Foreign Relations' Committee of the C. I. P. B. C. which has prepared a Memorandum which will be considered by the Lambeth Conference.

The New Situation Facing the Churches

This Memorandum contains proposals for comity which will cover wider ground than the original rules of 20 years ago. They picture the situation between congregations of which the Mar Thoma congregation will be a considerable distance from its own country. The Mar Thoma Church has shown tremendous virility, specially amongst its young people, in going out to work for the

Church in different parts of India and in the neighbouring countries. Besides, therefore, the congregations which have been formed in many towns in different parts of India, there are these missionary groups at work.

Until a few years ago it was a custom in the Mar Thoma Church to have only two Bishops. This number has now been increased to five and one of the five has special responsibilities for members of the Church outside Travancore. He travels not only in India, but also to Malaya. Nonetheless it can be said the dispersion of the members of the Mar Thoma Church has outgrown the administration of the Church. There is, therefore, an interesting suggestion that arrangements might be made for members of the Mar Thoma Church to become temporarily members of the Anglican Church, when beyond the reach of their own Church, while retaining the right to resume membership in their own Church on returning to their own country. Such a provision has been made in the relationship between the Anglican Church and the Church of South India, and it will be interesting to see if something similar commends itself to the Lambeth Conference. The Lambeth Conference is a Meeting of Bishops of the Anglican Communion from all over the world and its approval of such a provision would be specially necessary because it is the members of the Mar Thoma Church who go outside India, who may specially require the assistance of such a provision, and that means that it is a question which does not only concern the C. I. P. B. C.

In addition to the Rules of Comity, the conversations raised the question of the participation of Bishops of either Church in the Consecrations of the other. Both Churches recognised that such an action would imply for them a degree of fullness of intercommunion which was not pictured in the first conversations of more than twenty years ago. The precise act in the Consecration of Bishops in either Church, in which such a visiting Bishop would share, differs. Precise implications of sharing in such an act will need to be studied and understood by scholars of each church.

There may be some concern among the members of the Mar Thoma Church as to whether closer relations with the Anglican Church will make more difficult the development of relations with the Church of South

India. This does not seem to be at all likely, and indeed it may assist relations with the Church of South India to have relations with the Anglican Communion at large more fully defined.

We see therefore a hopeful move forward into a wider area of Church Union on the part of these two Churches. At present the relationship is limited and, not only to the Church of one Province of the Anglican Communion, but strictly almost to one former Diocese of that Church. Circumstances have already burst such narrow bounds and the occasion has come to refashion the garments of a child that is growing in stature.

Implications for North India.

The implications of all this for negotiations for Church Union in North India are not very clear. However, any development in relations of inter-communion between the Anglican Church and others, in particular with one of the Eastern Churches, which has its home in

India, cannot but provide examples for the future when a United Church with the Episcopate is seeking to develop relations with other Churches, whether those Churches have been formed on the same lines or are Churches with which one of those United Churches had already grown in fellowship. Such a development may also create interesting precedents for relationships with branches of the Church outside India, but not necessarily with the countries from which the missionaries came in the first instance to foster the birth and growth of the constituents of the United Church. One of the areas in which the Mar Thoma Church may especially require the assistance of the Anglican Church is pastoral care and supervision in East Africa, and it is possible that the relations between the rest of India and East Africa may so develop as to make it desirable for ways to be explored of mutual assistance in such matters.

Anglican and Presbyterian Churches

REV. WILLIAM STEWART

(*Relations between Anglican and Presbyterian Churches*, a joint Report, Edinburgh, The Saint Andrew Press : Price 3/6d; also Cheap Edition published by the Church of Scotland, price 1/6d)

As in many other countries in Europe, there are "national" Churches both in Scotland and in England. The relation of the Church to the State differs greatly as between the two countries, yet there are substantial grounds on which both "the Church of Scotland" and "the Church of England" may claim their national status. This does not mean that by any means all Christians, or all non-Roman Christians, are members of these Churches. The "Free Churches" in England are large and play a notable part in the nation's life. In Scotland they are numerically much smaller in proportion to the national Church, yet there also other protestant bodies are far from negligible. In spite of this, however, unquestionably the "national" Churches of Scotland and England are important in their respective countries and each plays a large part in a world

wide confessional "Family" or "Communion".

The outstanding difference between the two is that the Church of England is episcopal and the Church of Scotland presbyterian. Generally speaking, this difference has held since the reformation in the 16th century. It is true that almost throughout the 17th century strenuous attempts, largely political, were made to secure uniformity between the two countries. Consequently there were periods when episcopacy was in the ascendant in Scotland and there was a short period, during the Commonwealth, when presbyterianism was dominant in England. These were, however, temporary, and after the Revolution in 1688 the two countries apparently "agreed to differ", and the Churches went their several ways without further attempt to influence one another. Even so, a reminder of the old struggle remains in the continued existence of a numerically small "Episcopal Church in Scotland" and of a small "Presbyterian Church of England". The general cleavage between the denominations has kept each of these apart from the

life of the national Churches on both sides of the Border.

Concern for Unity

The twentieth century awakening of the Christian conscience to the scandal of disunity has not left unaffected the Churches in Great Britain. Some of the events which have meant so much in the story took place there, e. g. the "Edinburgh Conference" of 1910 and the issue of the Lambeth Appeal in 1920. Later on, western churches have been influenced by the example of South India and negotiations like our own in the North, in which, through the missionary enterprise, they have indeed been involved. At the same time, division at the Lord's Table as between two great neighbouring national Churches has increasingly been felt to be a painful and intolerable offence. There have therefore been conferences between the two national Churches, particularly in 1932-34 and again in 1949-51. What distinguishes the most recent series of talks from these is the fact that the two minority Churches, episcopal and presbyterian, have shared as full members. Also, hitherto there have been proposals to improve relations between the several churches, particularly across the Border. This time there is an attempt to see the way forward to a complete reconciliation. This would not mean uniformity in all things and would not involve a single "Church of Great Britain"; but it would involve full inter-communion and unity, and also reconciliation in each country between the "national" Church and the respective episcopal and presbyterian minority.

In view of the key position in their world families held by both the Church of England and the Church of Scotland, and also their share in many common enterprises throughout the world, the authors of this Report believe that what they do will be of more than local interest and that:

"a notable act of reconciliation between them could not fail to introduce a new and promising element into the whole field of ecumenical relationships" (p. 11).

Everyone would not accept the view that differences between episcopacy and presbyterianism are necessarily among the most profound among Christian divisions, and many would think it good if these delegations could be joined by others; nevertheless the statement just quoted is not likely to be seriously disputed.

The Report

The joint authors, appointed by four Churches, form an outstanding body of men, among whom are several distinguished theologians. They have produced a weighty document. It is a remarkable achievement that it is a unanimous document. It must therefore command the greatest respect in the Churches concerned as they study it. Whether or not its proposals will in fact be accepted by the Churches in the early or distant future is, however, by no means easy to foretell.

What the joint body had before it as its task was not to work out a draft constitution for a united Church but rather to determine.

"those changes in the Churches which would be requisite for the goal of the reintegration of the whole Church of Christ" (p. 9).

This ambitious task was bound to involve a sketch of elements which would find a place in the constitution of churches in full communion with one another. As a result, we find a discussion which in many ways follows lines familiar in the North India negotiations. For example, the Report accepts episcopacy as an essential element in such a pattern, but recognises the need for some changes in episcopacy as it is exercised in England today. It further sees that episcopacy may be woven into a presbyterian pattern of Church government, with a person called "Bishop-in-Presbytery". The outcome would surely be an episcopate "both constitutional and historic", as proposed in the North India plan.

The Report equally clearly recognises the need for "an office akin to the Presbyterian eldership" as needed to enable the decisions of the Church to be made "by the whole Church, by the body of Christ in its entirety" (p. 27). A valuable appendix gives a clear statement on the eldership, both historical and practical.

If, alongside these elements, we miss a parallel emphasis on the congregation as a whole, such as is in the North India Plan, we can only recognise here a gap due to the fact that the conversations were not enriched by the presence of Baptist, Congregationalist or Methodist.

Apart from matters like these, the Report contains a valuable statement of "theological considerations" especially on the relation of

Church and ministry. This kind of statement, together with the whole tone of Christian charity which marks the Report throughout, helps to make it a most significant document which will repay careful study in situations far removed from its original setting. It is heartening to find these great Churches so seriously concerned with Christian unity and all will pray that their endeavours may prove fruitful.

Some Comments

There is an important respect in which the approach underlying this Report differs from that both of the Church of South India and of the Northern negotiations. This appears in the very terms in which the joint body state what they understood to be their task, namely to study.

"the kind of modifications in the two Church systems....which might be regarded as likely in the long run to be requisite....."

It is also made clear that at this stage at least actual union is not proposed. As a result the Report discusses certain elements in Church Order which it is thought that the several Churches must adopt in order to open the way to fuller unity.

This approach is not that with which we are familiar in India. Here there has been no suggestion of changes which must be made in the negotiating churches themselves to pave the way to union. Instead, we have tried to work out a pattern of Church life which we hope to share within union, and to decide by what steps we can actually enter that union. The procedure both in South India and as proposed in the North assumes that *within the fellowship of union* we shall all learn and receive from one another and grow into a new pattern which will differ in important respects from that with which we are familiar now. There is, however, no suggestion that we can or ought to carry out such reforms so as to make ourselves fit to unite with others.

The strength of the Indian approach is that the various elements of Church life are not isolated or cut off from the total life of the whole body. We shall share them with one another essentially because we shall share life with one another. On the other hand, the approach of this Report seems to treat these "elements" as if they could be detached from the total life of the Churches and even

exchanged in an isolated way. As an episcopal critic has stated :

"the episcopal principle cannot thus be separated from its context in the body of the Catholic Church" (Douglas Lockhart in a leaflet).

The comment would apply to almost any element or principle which counts in the corporate life of a Church. There seems to be a real weakness in the Report on this point.

The elements treated in this way are chiefly the historic episcopate and the eldership. Inevitably the implications come most clearly to light regarding the first of these, for it is of the essence of the historic episcopate that it must be transmitted in a certain way. We therefore find the statement that it would be necessary that the Church of Scotland should be given Bishops by a ceremony of consecration carried out by Anglican Bishops, as a condition prior to further advance towards intercommunion and unity. The difference between this and the North India proposal for unification of the ministries is very marked. First, so far from this being a "mutual" act as in the North India proposals, it entirely depends on episcopal consecration. Secondly, it therefore assumes that a conclusion has been reached in a debate, which is very far from being settled, on the significance of "apostolic succession", whereas on this matter the North India proposals leave that question fully open. Thirdly, however, and most seriously, it treats this gift as something which can be effectively *handed over* from one Church to another, instead of it being accepted as something in which we share, through the far bigger event of sharing a whole life with one another in the actual union of Churches.

This example suggests a serious flaw in the assumptions which underlie the method of the Report. This is that, somehow or other, we can take steps by setting right our orders, to reach that "fullness of the Church in... ultimate unity" which, in actual fact we can only hope to do in the condition of unity itself. Such an approach, in spite of the Report's desire to avoid judgements about the validity of orders (p. 23) is bound to imply the judgement that certain forms of Church order give us a fuller guarantee of the grace of God than do others, and to lead to an isolated concern with such matters. But surely there can be

no security for us which is built on an assurance that we have done the correct thing. When we have done all things we are still "unprofitable servants", humbly dependent on the unbought grace of God.

If there is a flaw here, it may arise from the fact that in its "theological considerations" the Report concentrates almost wholly on the question of the Church and the Ministry. Yet the writers themselves had said it would be necessary to begin form

"the fundamental theological problems of the nature of the Church of Christ underlie all questions of Order and unity" (p. 40).

Had such a study been recorded there would surely have been clearer conclusions drawn from the creation of the Church in Christ and a reminder that it is only "when that which is perfect is come" that we may look for a "fulness of catholicity" which we cannot possibly achieve through mere reform of our orders.

Conclusion

A practical consequence of the approach has been that controversy has been stirred not so much on the fundamental matter of unity as on the particular elements to which attention has been called. This may be at least in part a consequence of the form of the Report. At the same time the kind of discussion which is now going on in Scotland suggests

that a few in the Church there, have yet felt any urgency in the need for visible Christian unity. Yet without this sense of urgency it is not easy to see what can be done. The Report itself states that if there were to be a "solemn resolve to achieve reconciliation and unity" (p 17) on the part of the Churches the whole situation would be transformed. Surely this is right. Only a resolve similar to the determination of the Churches in North India will make advance possible. But that resolve can grow only out of a more widespread sense of urgency than yet appears. It is doubtful if that will emerge from consideration of long term discussions of the ultimate conditions of Christian unity; but it might well come if the Churches in the same area became more deeply aware of each other and of their common responsibility. That would involve a more direct and local problem, and one which probably could not be confined to Presbyterian and Anglican. There are signs that a concern is stirring.

Yet also it may be that the sheer shock of the far-reaching proposals in this Report will have the effect of a great quickening of interest in the whole matter, with a consequent stimulation of awareness that change must come. And, if this should bear fruit in a genuine "resolve" to find the way through, then there can be little doubt that the patient work which has gone into the making of this Report will bear rich fruit as the detailed consequences of that Resolve are worked out.

BOOK REVIEW

The Christian World Mission: A Reconsideration by R. Pierce Beaver, M. A., Ph. D. (Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta) Rs. 1.25.

Though only consisting of about 40 pages, this booklet does not make easy reading. It is the text of the William Carey Lecture for 1957, delivered at Serampore College.

The introduction begins from the inspiration of Carey and his view of World Mission, and reminds us of the advent of a new era in the world mission situation. The world-wide mission of western Protestantism is being replaced by the global mission of a universally distributed Church and there is need, especially in theological colleges, of Carey's type of thinking and leadership,—including the

taking into account of the views of Churches in Africa and Asia. Dr. Beaver reminds us that 'Mission' is not the sending of western Churches, but 'God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself'—the timeless task of the whole Church.

The main lecture is divided into two parts—the first dealing with the external and internal factors necessitating a reconsideration, and the second considering the theological task involved. In the former, Dr. Beaver gives a detailed account of the present situation in national and social thinking and suggests that Christianity is now on the defensive with the revival of ancient faiths in a new age of world missions. As a startling

illustration of this revival he mentions the incident of two Pakistanis standing outside Riverside Church in New York handing out non-Christian tracts to worshippers. All this, he suggests, leads to two attitudes,—first of panic because of closing doors, and second the false assumption that the mission has ended because the ecumenical age has come.

Dealing with such factors as nationalism, communism and the welfare state, the lecturer reminds us that in all these, what lack of faith considers as adversaries, may be open doors. The revolution through nationalism in Africa and Asia has stimulated new concern about mission and that revolution must be claimed for Christ since it has largely been drawn forth by Him—in the concern for the individual and the underprivileged. 'There is forming', says Dr. Beaver, 'a vast new global frontier of a social and economic nature...on which there is a thrilling challenge to proclaim Christ as Lord.' The lecturer gives a thoughtful and careful diagnosis of the problems thus posed for the Church, with reminder of the need for a truer partnership and an indigenous expression of Christian faith.

Ending this first section by saying, 'it becomes more and more clear that progress towards effective strategy is awaiting theological illumination', Dr. Beaver leads on to 'The Theological Task'.

This section seems less clear and, although much is said of what is needed, one is left wishing the lecturer had given more insight into how the task should be undertaken. He points out that the pioneer missionaries, acting in obedience, proclaimed the Gospel, but found that they could not be content with word of mouth and example of life only. The result has been the growth of the modern enterprise with its varied aspects, but there was little concern for its theological basis until the time of the Tambaram Conference. With the dawn of the new era, Dr. Beaver reminds us that there is need for the illumination of the Bible and Theology, and therefore an opportunity for all branches of theological training to make a contribution.

Dr. Beaver then deals with some of the attempts to explain the idea of the apostolate and points out that the justified activities of the Church are derived from the essential functions of worship, fellowship and the proclamation of the Gospel. At one point he makes the thought-provoking statement that there are 'young' churches but no 'younger' churches—and all are engaged in the task. For us all there is the task of thinking out the problems involved in our peculiar act of obedience to the Great Commission.

In its few pages the booklet covers a wide range of points important to the understanding of our work to-day.

M. L. Brand

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